

Tribes advocate Snake dams removal

Northwest tribal leaders are calling for the removal of four massive dams on the Snake River. This would help restore the dwindling salmon runs of the river system, tribal leaders say.

In a letter to Pres. Biden and members of Congress from Oregon, Washington and Idaho, the 11 tribal representatives—under the umbrella of the Northwest Tribal Salmon Alliance—say breaching the dams is needed to avoid extinction of Snake River salmon and steelhead; and to honor treaties between tribes and the federal government.

“Congress and the president must act boldly and urgently to remove the lower Snake River dams and put into place a permanent solution to fix this crisis before it passes a point of no return,” they wrote.

The letter was signed by members of the Yakama and Lummi nations, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation and the Tulalip, Swinomish and Makah tribes. The signers do not necessarily represent the official position of their tribal governments.

Absent from the list were representatives from the Nez Perce and Shoshone-Bannock tribes of Idaho that have treaty rights on the Snake River and its tributaries. Both tribes have endorsed Idaho Rep. Mike Simpson’s proposal to breach the four lower Snake River dams. And the Nez Perce have long been involved in a legal battle over the dams and their effect on salmon and steelhead.

Some environmental groups are against Simpson’s proposal, saying it would preclude future litigation based on the Endangered Species Act and other laws.

The Snake River dams produce hydropower and allow tug-and-barge transportation between Lewiston and the Tri-Cities. But the concrete, steel and earthen



Lower Granite Dam on the Snake River near Almota, Wash. Courtesy

structures also harm juvenile fish on their downstream journey to the Pacific Ocean, despite including fish ladders.

They are blamed as one of the top causes of Snake River salmon and steelhead landing on the Endangered Species list.

Many of the tribes in the Columbia Basin and elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest signed treaties with the federal government that reserved their rights to fish in “usual and accustomed” places. If salmon and steelhead are allowed to go extinct, the federal government will not be meeting the terms of the treaties, they argue.

“Salmon are inseparable from who we are. We exist because salmon exist. They are our food, ceremony, our culture and the very heart of our economy and lifeway,” the letter to Biden and Congress states.

“Even as our ancestors’ lives and homeland were threatened, they made sure to protect within the treaties our ancestral salmon lifeway. Those treaties were promises made by the United States government. Those promises must be

kept.” They said they can’t tolerate more delays from the federal government, and while they appreciate a collaborative process being led by the governors of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana aimed at finding solutions to declining salmon runs, “the time for talk has long passed.”

The letter doesn’t mention the recent \$33 billion proposal from Simpson, Republican Congressman, that would breach the dams and mitigate affected communities and industries. Simpson’s effort is mentioned in an accompanying news release. The alliance was formed to advocate for the importance of restoration of the lower Snake River and salmon recovery in the Pacific Northwest.

“The Northwest delegation must engage now to ensure a future where salmon are once again abundant,” said Don Sampson of the Northwest Tribal Salmon Alliance in the news release.

“What we cannot do is wait. Waiting is death. It is our sacred obligation to preserve these salmon and our ways of life.”

Reservation burn notice

Wildfire officials are reporting that the number of small wildfires has tripled this spring partly because dry conditions.

Warm Springs Fire Management reminds you that a burn permit is required for any burning on the reservation.

You can get a permit by

stopping in at the Fire Management Dispatch office at the industrial park.

When you plan on burning, check the weather and don’t burn on windy days. You also need to call the Warm Springs Police Department to notify them that you will be doing burning prior to getting started.

State and regional responses to Covid-19 post-Easter increases

The state of Oregon—including Jefferson County—has seen an increase this month in Covid-19 cases. A part of the cause may be attributed to Easter gatherings, health officials said.

Meanwhile, as a result of the increase, a top state health official has considered indefinitely extending rules requiring masks and social distancing in all workplaces in the state.

The proposal would keep the rules in place until they’re “no longer necessary.” New Covid-19 incidence statistics are coming out this week, and could impact the school sports at Madras High School and elsewhere.

The administrator of Oregon’s Occupational Safety and Health department says the “permanent” rules are needed because of a technicality in state law that allows the

current restrictions to expire.

Here in Warm Springs you can call 541-553-2131 to set up a vaccine appointment.

From St. Charles Health

A recent message from St. Charles Health System president and chief executive officer Joe Sluka says in part:

“Almost 91,000 people have been vaccinated in Central Oregon, including more than 82 percent of our residents who are 80 and older.

“This is significant because in the early days of the pandemic, this group represented a disproportionate number of hospitalizations and deaths.

“To achieve what we call ‘herd immunity’ we need at least 70 percent of our community to get vaccinated.”

Employment with the tribes

The following are positions posted by the Confederated Tribes Personnel Department. You can reach the department at 541-553-3262.

Fish biologist II. Rangeland management specialist. Fuels monitor technician. Corrections officer trainee - limited duration. Youth barista opportunity.

Administrative/Intake/Media - limited duration. Handy technician trainee (2 positions) - limited duration. Education data clerk and research - limited duration. Budget contract and grant analyst - part-time.

Wildlife Technician. Fish Tech II - limited duration (4 positions) - limited duration. Budget contract and grant analyst -

full time. Fish Tech I. TERO dispatch/compliance officer.

Patrol officer. Food cart trainee - limited duration. Bookkeeper - part time. Archaeologist II. Patrol sergeant. Administrative officer. Home visitor (2 positions).

Conservation enforcement officer. Youth program employment - limited duration. Wildlife technician.

Covid-19 temporary technician (6 positions) - limited duration. Indian Language teacher. Wildlife biologist II. Soil scientist/watershed planner.

Director of Finance. Development director. Corrections officer (5 positions). Wildlife biologist II. Fisheries Department manager.

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Enforcement is hiring four new police officers. The officers will be based at Hood River or Boardman. Starting salary range is \$50,506 to \$55,157. Closing date is April 30. Employment application and full job announcement: critfc.org

Regarding the Johnson & Johnson vaccine

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control earlier this month recommended a pause in the administering of the Johnson & Johnson covid vaccine.

In response and as a safety precaution, Warm Springs Community Health has been reaching out to anyone who has gotten a Johnson & Johnson dose. An estimated 190 community members have gotten the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

For context regarding this issue: 6.85 million doses of Johnson & Johnson vaccine had administered in the U.S. Out of that total, there were six reported cases of a rare type of blood clot in individuals who had received the Johnson & Johnson shot. All six cases occurred among women ages 18 to 48 years. In each case, the symptoms appeared 6-13 days after receiving the vaccine.

Symptoms to look for include:

Severe headache. Back pain. Severe abdominal pain. Nausea and vomiting. New neurological symptoms (weakness in one part of the body, changes in vision). Petechiae (tiny red spots on the skin- look like pinpoint bruises). New or easy bruising. Shortness of breath. Leg swelling.

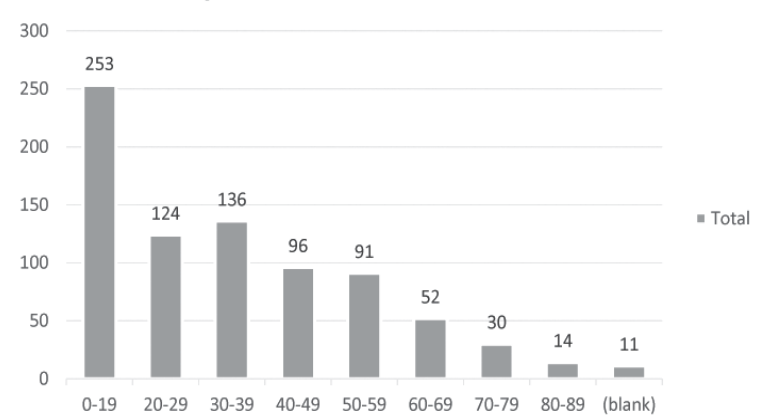
Warm Springs people who got the Johnson & Johnson vaccine who have questions or concerns can call 541-553-5512.

Indian Health Services and Community Health provided the most recent data on the incidence of Covid-19 on the reservation. The demographics are as of April 14. On that date there were four active covid cases on the reservation, isolating and receiving daily monitoring.

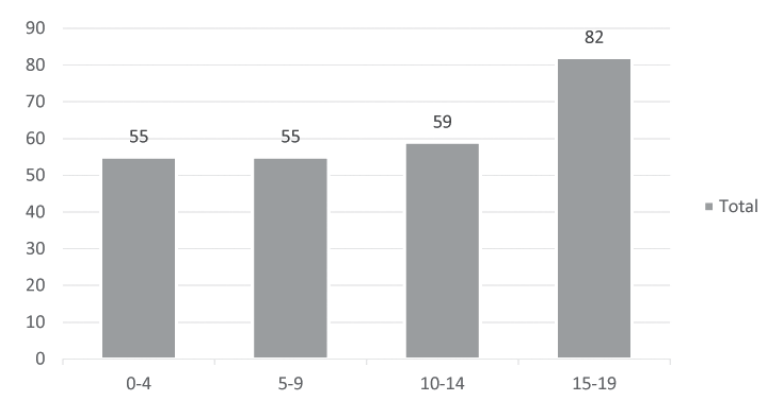
As of April 14, since the pandemic began last March, there had been a total of 807 cumulative cases on the reservation and among the IHS service area members.

Due to the number of active cases being less than five, only the cumulative numbers are reported on the demographic charts, for patient confidentiality.

Ages: Cumulative Cases 4.14.2021

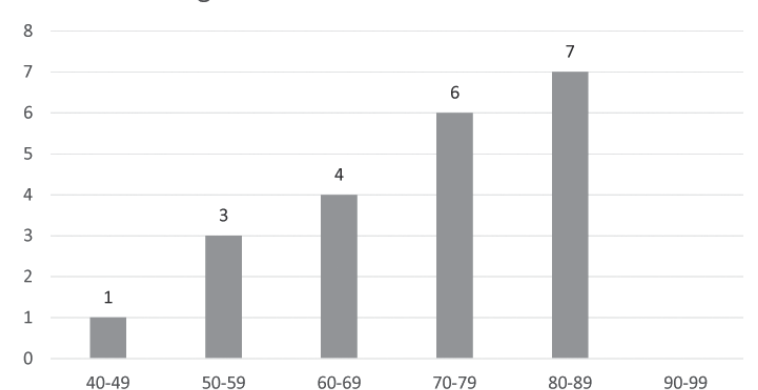


Child Ages: Cumulative Cases 4.14.2021



As of April 14, there was one tribal community member hospitalized and on a ventilator. Since the pandemic began, 74 had been hospitalized. Total deaths due to Covid-19 among the tribal community has been 22.

Ages: Cumulative Deaths 4.14.2021



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